

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 SS-15 NSC-10 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01

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R 160935Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8934

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CONCPAC

UNCLAS SEOUL 4121

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BU, UR, KS

SUBJECT: ROK JOURNALISTS VISIT LENINGRAD AND BULGARIA

BEGIN SUMMARY: CHOSUN ILBO PARIS CORRESPONDENT MADE BRIEF VISIT TO LENINGRAD JULY 12, BUT AFTER SPENDING MOST OF DAY IN CITY, WAS INFORMED BY SOVIET BORDER POLICE THAT HE ALLOWED TO ENTER USSR "BY MISTAKE". WHILE IN LENINGRAD CORRESPONDENT HAD LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WITH UNIDENTIFIED NORTH KOREANS. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT DANGA ILBO PARIS CORRESPONDENT REPORTED HE HAS BEEN ISSUED VISA VALID FOR ONE MONTH VISIT TO BULGARIA AND ENTERED BULGARIA JULY 13. END SUMMARY.

1. JULY 14 & 15 MAJOR SEOUL DAILY CHOSON ILBO CARRIED EXCLUSIVE REPORTS FROM THEIR PARIS CORRESPONDENT, SHIN YONG SUK, JUST RETURNED FROM BRIEF VISIT TO LENINGRAD. THE ARTICLE REPORTS SHIN RECEIVED PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO LENINGRAD FOR "REPORTING AND TOURISM" FROM SOVIET TOURIST SERVICE IN HELSINKI. UNCLASSIFIED

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HE SAILED FROM HELSINKI ON BOARD FINNISH TOUR VESSEL JULY 11

ARRIVING MORNING JULY 12. SHIN SPENT MORNING WITH GROUP FROM SHIP TOURING CULTURAL POINTS OF INTEREST. HE THEN WENT TO INTOURIST HOTEL WHERE HE HAD RESERVATIONS FOR LUNCH. THERE SHIN MET BY TWO NORTH KOREANS WHO WERE UNKNOWN TO HIM BUT GREETED HIM BY NAME AND EVEN JOINED HIM FOR LUNCH. DURING 45 MINUTE LUNCH NORTH KOREANS ASKED WHY HE "DARED" VISIT A SOCIALIST COUNTRY AND HE REPLIED HE HAD PERMISSION OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT. THEY SUGGESTED HE TRAVEL WITH THEM TO PYONGYANG IN WHAT ARTICLE DESCRIBED AS "THREATENING" MANNER. WHIN DECLINED BUT THEY OFFERED TO ARRANGE VISIT FOR HIM AT SOME FUTURE TIME IF HE WISHED.

2. ARTICLES REPORT KIM WANDERED BY HIMSELF AROUND CITY AFTER LUNCH AND RETURNED TO HIS SHIP IN AFTERNOON. HE REBOARDED SHIP WITH NO DIFFICULTY GIVING UP HIS SHORE PASS TO SOVIET BORDER POLICE AND RECEIVING PASSPORT IN RETURN. ONCE ABOARD, HOWEVER, SHIN CALLED TO CAPTAIN'S CABIN WHERE HE CONFRONTED BY SOVIET BORDER POLICE. POLICE SAID HE HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO ENTER USSR "BY MISTAKE" AND INSTRUCTED CAPTAIN NOT TO ALLOW HIM TO LEAVE SHIP AGAIN. VESSEL SAILED FOR HELSINKI EARLY NEXT MORNING IN ANY EVENT SO SHIN MISSED ONLY EVENING OF JULY 12 IN LENINGRAD.

3. JULY 16 EVENING EDITION DONGA ILBO REPORTED ITS PARIS CORRESPONDENT HAD BEEN ISSUED VISA VALID FOR ONE MONTH VISIT TO BULGARIA ON JULY 11 IN PARIS. HE ENTERED BULGARIA JULY 13 AND WILL STAY ABOUT A WEEK. DONGA REPORT SAYS HE FIRST KOREAN JOURNALIST TO BE GIVEN VISA TO COMMUNIST STATE IN NORMAL MANNER, I.E. HAVING VISA STAMPED IN ROK PASSPORT RATHER THAN ON DOCUMENT SEPARATE FROM PASSPORT.
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